

## **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS PER ADDENDUM NO. 1**

### **General Questions**

1. **Question:** Can an agency submit more than one (1) application? If an agency is allowed to submit more than one (1) implementation proposal, would only one (1) of the implementation projects be considered for funding or would it be possible for one agency to receive funding for multiple projects (if they are submitted on separate applications)?

**Answer:** While vendors may submit more than one (1) proposal, we encourage vendors to limit submissions to no more than two (2). If an organization submits more than one (1) strong proposal, the County is not precluding the possibility that more than one (1) could be selected to receive funding.

2. **Question:** If an organization is allowed to submit more than one (1) implementation proposal, would only one (1) of the implementation projects be considered for funding or would it be possible for one (1) organization to receive funding for multiple projects (if they are submitted on separate applications)?

**Answer:** More than one (1) implementation project may be considered for funding but keep in mind that there is only \$10 million available to allocate overall.

3. **Question:** What is the anticipated number of grantees?

**Answer:** The number of grantees can range from one (1) to several. We will consider investing in one (1) \$10 million dollar initiative if that is the projected cost, but our goal is to invest in several projects of various scale. Depending on the scale of each project, the number of grantees will vary, and the grant amounts may range from hundreds of thousands to millions.

4. **Question:** Are organizations outside of Harris County allowed to apply? Can nonprofits in other Texas Counties can apply? Can international organizations apply?

**Answer:** Yes, organizations outside of Harris County and non-United States entities are welcome to apply; however, implementation and evaluation of the programs or interventions that are selected to receive Early Childhood Impact Fund (ECIF) funding must be able to serve Harris County residents.

### **Vendor Selection**

5. **Question:** Who is the audience [for the RFP] and who are the decision makers that will be reviewing the proposals? Can you share additional details about the evaluation process? Are only Harris County citizens allowed to evaluate the proposals?

**Answer:** A five (5) person evaluation committee consisting of one (1) representative of each of the five (5) members of the Harris County Commissioners Court will review proposals and make the final decisions with respect to which vendors will be awarded funding through the ECIF.

6. **Question:** Are only Harris County citizens allowed to evaluate the proposals?

**Answer:** The Early Childhood Impact Fund – Evaluation (ECIFE) is looking for proposals from third-party evaluators to provide rigorous data evaluation of the impact of the funded implementation initiative.

7. **Question:** How much does the cost per child factor into your decision?

**Answer:** The review team will evaluate each proposal in its entirety. The project budget will be evaluated on its cost effectiveness and impact.

### **Eligibility**

8. **Question:** Can funding be requested for a new idea or initiative, or does it have to be an existing program or intervention?

**Answer:** Both existing and new programs are eligible to apply for funding. The ECIF is intended to both identify the broad array of efforts already underway and invite pioneering ideas and interventions from across the state and country that have strong potential to be effective in Harris County.

Programs that have been in existence for years seeking expansion resources and nascent ideas will be given equal consideration. Vendors should be able to explain how they intend to use the requested funding, as indicated in the RFP packet. Vendors may request funding for current operations or expansion, among other possibilities.

9. **Question:** Is the ECIF limited to early childhood programs and services only, or are other child and parent centered organizations also eligible?

**Answer:** While other parent and child centered programs and interventions are welcome to apply and will be considered, the Impact Fund is intended primarily to invest in solutions that improve infant, toddler, and early childhood outcomes focused on the prenatal-to-three age range.

10. **Question:** Are institutes of higher education eligible?

**Answer:** Yes, institutes of higher education are eligible.

11. **Question:** Are faith-based programs eligible?

**Answer:** Faith-based organizations are eligible to apply. However, programs should be open to all residents of Harris County, and faith-based programs may not be considered if the population served is exclusive to members of a certain faith.

12. **Question:** Does the size of the organization matter? Do small organizations qualify, or are you focused on larger ones that serve more children/families?

**Answer:** Proposals will be judged on feasibility, execution, budget, and plan, regardless of the size of the organization or grantee.

13. **Question:** Will you consider programs that address disabilities?

**Answer:** All proposals for early childhood initiatives will be considered.

### **Initiative Characteristics**

14. **Question:** What types of ideas and interventions is the County looking to fund and why?

**Answer:** Individuals and organizations from the public, nonprofit, academic, and private sectors are encouraged to propose their best early childhood ideas, programs, and interventions.

To achieve the greatest impact, Harris County will prioritize promising programs grounded in the science of early brain development and/or programs that address the unmet needs of infants, toddlers,

**and young children and their parents from low-income and disadvantaged families. Such programs or other interventions must focus on serving children prenatal to age three.**

**Early childhood initiative topics of particular interest include but are not limited to:**

- **Nurturing and responsive parent-child relationships**
- **Nurturing and responsive childcare in safe settings**
- **Reduction in adverse childhood experiences**
- **Attachment, executive functioning, and language development**
- **Access to needed services**
- **Parents' ability to both work and provide quality childcare**
- **Sufficient household resources and at-home supports for caregiving**
- **Healthy and equitable maternal and birth outcomes**
- **Optimal childhood health and development**
- **Parental health and emotional wellbeing**
- **Other early childhood education initiatives that promote literacy, numeracy, cognitive development, and motor skills**

**15. Question:** Are there certain projects that are not allowable?

**Answer:** All projects that meet the RFP requirements are welcome to apply.

**16. Question:** What are the eligibility requirements for families to be served through the intervention(s)?

**Answer:** There are no eligibility requirements for families served. However, we will prioritize promising programs grounded in the science of early brain development and/or that address the unmet needs of infants, toddlers, and young children and their parents from low-income and disadvantaged families.

**17. Question:** What would you say are important social outcomes specifically in Harris County? School readiness? Reduction in child protective services? Parent outcomes?

**Answer:** This RFP does not target specific outcomes, but is broadly soliciting proposals to invest in the most promising cost-effective, evidence-based solutions for improving early childhood outcomes in Harris County. A list of outcomes can be found in the RFP, and additional resources on outcomes can be found on the [Prenatal-to-3 Policy Clearinghouse](#) webpage and the [National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers Measuring Impacts](#) resources.

**18. Question:** Is the end goal to fund direct services or can organizations propose innovative process improvement strategies that increase access to services?

**Answer:** Both types of proposals are welcome. The ECIF is intended to both identify the broad array of efforts already underway and invite pioneering ideas and interventions from across the state and country that have strong potential to be effective in Harris County.

**19. Question:** Of the focus areas of the impact fund, are you more focused on quality/level of impact or the cost/scalability of the program?

**Answer:** Both scalability and long-term impact will be considered. For example, a proposal that seeks funding for a small pilot program with the potential to be highly impactful would be stronger if it also discusses a feasible vision for scaling-up over time.

20. **Question:** Are you focusing on an early stage pilot, mid stage development, or late stage proven programs - in terms of proven results?

**Answer:** Proposals for programs and interventions at all stages of development are welcome.

21. **Question:** Are you defining Early Childhood as zero (0) – three (3) years old? Can early childhood include 4-5 year olds (i.e., before school)?

**Answer:** The goal of the ECIF is to support initiatives focused on the prenatal-to-three (3) age range. All proposals will be reviewed and we will still consider projects with a wider age range or projects serving a specific age group, but those serving the early childhood years, focused on the prenatal-to-three (3) age range, will be prioritized.

22. **Question:** Can we build in incentives for families/parents to participate/attend training and educational activities for brain development

**Answer:** Yes, the proposal may include incentives for family participation.

23. **Question:** Are there target zip codes that this grant will focus on- i.e. highest poverty areas?

**Answer:** While the County has not established target zip codes at this time, the goal is to address developmental disparities with this fund. The County encourage vendors to describe whether and how their proposed program or intervention will address developmental disparities and promote equity, including whether and how the location of their proposed services is intended to further these and other specific goals of their program or intervention. References to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Social Vulnerability Index (CDC SVI), social determinants of health, or other relevant indicators could be helpful to include, but are not necessary.

24. **Question:** What happens in terms of reimbursement if families are non compliant/don't show up to programming?

**Answer:** The organizations selected to participate in this program are responsible for the effectiveness of their programs and should have a plan for engaging families to ensure the success of their program.

25. **Question:** Since our technology does both assessment and train, do you think we are a better fit to apply for evaluation or implementation?

**Answer:** An organization may submit a proposal for both the implementation or evaluation portion of the program, if the organization is equipped for both types of services.

26. **Question:** Is there a minimum requirement for the days of service offered to children and families?

**Answer:** There is no minimum requirement for days of service, but the program purpose is to allocate funding to pilot or further develop the most promising, scalable programs and interventions, rigorously evaluate the impact of implementation on key early childhood outcomes, and provide technical support for continuous quality improvement throughout the two-to-three year funding period.

### **Vendor Characteristics**

27. **Question:** What types of entities are eligible to apply for funding?

**Answer: The County is soliciting proposals from public, private, and nonprofit individuals, organizations, institutions, and service providers. Collaborative and/or system-building proposals and partnerships submitted by coalitions or multiple entities are welcome.**

**28. Question: What if a vendor applies as a consortium for one proposal and as an individual entity for another?**

**Answer: Yes, the vendor can apply as a consortium in one (1) content area and as an individual institution in another content area.**

**29. Question: Are collaborative partnerships included?**

**Answer: Yes, proposals from collaborative partnerships are allowed.**

### **Funding Details**

**30. Question: What is the total amount of funding that a vendor can request to implement its early childhood idea or intervention?**

**Answer: Vendors should specify the amount of ECIF funding they seek. Depending on the types of projects proposed and number of submittals, the funding amount awarded to each selected project could vary significantly.**

**Vendors should specify the funding amount requested from \$0 to \$10 million. If the County evaluates the proposal and is willing to fund it at a lesser amount, the County will contact the vendor to negotiate alternative funding options.**

**Note, however, that the amount requested by vendors will only be an evaluation criterion insofar as it relates to the cost-effectiveness of the initiative being proposed for funding and implementation.**

**31. Question: Do we have to submit an estimate of the funds needed?**

**Answer: Yes, proposals must indicate and explain the funding amount requested from \$0 to \$10 million and provide a budget for annual project costs over the proposed timeline (not including evaluation costs).**

**32. Question: Will Harris County be making any partial funding awards if the full amount requested is determined to be in excess of what's available or seems reasonable?**

**Answer: The intent is to fully fund the selected proposals; however, partial funding may be possible or preferred under certain circumstances. If for some reason a request is not recommended to be fully funded, the County will communicate those reasons to the vendor and work with the vendor to determine if the proposed initiative can be carried out effectively given a reduced award.**

**33. Question: Over what time period can I request funding to implement my early childhood program or intervention? Is there a formal project start and/or end date for funding purposes?**

**Answer: Selected vendors will receive funding to pilot, refine, or scale their early childhood program or intervention over an initial two (2) to three (3) year funding period.**

**34. Question: If a vendor request funding for implementation from 4/15/21 through 4/16/23, does the vendor need to provide a separate budget justification for each year? With funding extending over two (2) or three (3) years, should the provided budget template be cumulative across the two (2) or three (3) years and then broken down by year within the justification?**

**Answer: On the proposal, the budget should include projected costs for the entirety of the vendor's grant regardless of timeline. All project costs should be included in one (1) budget, and the budget should encompass the entirety of the proposed work. If selected for an award, we may ask the vendor to provide a breakdown of expenses by year.**

35. **Question:** Are there any limitations on how vendors who are selected to receive funding to implement an idea or intervention can use it? For example, if we receive a grant of \$1 million, could we use it to open a new location for services?

**Answer: Funding is primarily intended to pilot, refine, or scale their program or intervention over an initial two (2) to three (3) year funding period. While we are open to proposals that ask for funding to support other aspects of their program or intervention, the intent is for funding to support start-up and/or implementation.**

**If other expenses appear to be excessive, the evaluation committee will take that into account. The project budget will be evaluated on its cost-effectiveness relative to its proposed scope and potential for impact.**

36. **Question:** What are my options if I am awarded funding but don't have a way to sustain my idea or intervention once the initial grant period ends?

**Answer: For programs and interventions selected for funding through this RFP, the County may consider up to three (3) years of renewal. Renewal is subject to approval by the County Commissioners Court. Once renewal options are exhausted, the contract must be rebid.**

**The intent is to bring attention to programs and interventions that this process identifies as having a significant impact on one (1) or more key early childhood outcomes, so that they can generate funding beyond the program period.**

37. **Question:** Will Harris County guarantee any additional funding to selected vendors beyond the amount initially awarded?

**Answer: Please refer to answer for question number 36.**

38. **Question:** Does Harris County expect to fund this in whole or in part with any federal grant dollars? If yes, would you please provide the CFDA number?

**Answer: Projects will be funded through the Harris County General Fund.**

39. **Question:** When doing the budget, is the lump sum for a year or spread over two (2) – three (3) years? Is this a one (1) year or multi-year grant?

**Answer: Selected vendors will receive a multi-year grant to be allocated across a two (2) to three (3) year funding term.**

40. **Question:** When will the decisions be made on the selected vendors and funding be awarded to grantees?

**Answer: The County has not yet decided on a precise deadline for selecting vendors and awarding funding, which will depend in part on the number and quality of applications. The review process will most likely begin in mid-February, and it could take a couple of months for the evaluation committee to reach and announce their decisions. Moreover, the evaluation committee may need to work with some vendors to seek clarification or more information about their proposed program or intervention**

**before making selections. It may then take additional time beyond the final selections for funding to be awarded directly to the chosen vendors depending on the particular circumstances and scope of the selected proposals. We will post an announcement date at a later time.**

- 41. Question:** Given the two (2) – three (3) year project length, will payment be made over time or up front at the time of award?

**Answer:** Vendors should propose (and be able to justify) a funding amount of between \$0 and \$10 million to support implementation of their early childhood program or intervention over a two (2) – three (3) year funding period (as discussed in the RFP). Vendors must be able to justify the amount requested and explain how and for what purpose the funding would be used. Although vendors should propose a timeline for payment (upfront, over time, etc.), the evaluation committee may work with some vendors on an individual basis (after reviewing and narrowing down proposals) to negotiate and determine the most appropriate allocation timeline and budget for their proposed program or intervention.

- 42. Question:** What costs are allowable/not allowable? Can a portion of the funding go to increasing capacity (hiring staff) in an organization in order to execute the program? Said another way, can a portion of the project budget include salaries and benefits? Can part of the bid include costs for overhead or purely for the service?

**Answer:** Expenses such as overhead, salaries, and benefits are all eligible expenses. However, if overhead or any other expenses appear to be excessive, the evaluation committee will take that into account. The project budget will be evaluated on its cost-effectiveness relative to its proposed scope and potential for impact.

- 43. Question:** So this seems almost like a two (2) part approval accepted for evaluation and then if the data pans out, funding is granted to expand. Is this correct?

**Answer:** The County's goal is to build an evidence base on which to scale up the most impactful programs in the future. Obviously the County cannot guarantee it will be able to award additional funding to any of the selected programs or interventions beyond the initial two (2) – three (3) year project period.

**Vendors that are not selected for an award during this initial ECIF funding period should not be deterred from re-submitting their proposal for consideration in possible future ECIF funding cycles.**

- 44. Question:** Is the budget for \$10 million over one (1) year or three (3) years? Would the proposal be for funding over one (1) year or annually?

**Answer:** Please refer to answer for question number 41.

### **Evaluation Process**

- 45. Question:** If my organization is selected to receive funding, does my early childhood initiative have to be evaluated by an independent researcher chosen by Harris County?

**Answer:** Yes, selected vendors must be committed to participating in rigorous independent evaluation of their program or intervention by a third-party evaluator that is selected and funded through ECIF.

- 46. Question:** Will Harris County be providing individuals to support evidence collecting?

**Answer:** The County will engage a third-party researcher to provide scientifically rigorous evaluation of the short- and long-term causal impacts of funded programs and initiatives using experimental or

**quasi-experimental methods.**

47. **Question:** We would typically build evaluation into proposals like this. Based on reading both RFPs, I'm assuming we should not include evaluation in an implementation proposal and thus depend on working with the selected vendors?

**Answers:** Correct. While the vendor may discuss how it would propose to evaluate its program, intervention, or approach to building evaluation into its programs, the County will select and fund a third-party evaluator to rigorously evaluate each program or intervention that receives funding through the ECIF.

48. **Question:** Will my organization have to enter into data sharing agreements with Harris County or the evaluator?

**Answer:** Yes, selected vendors must enter into data sharing agreements with the County.

49. **Question:** Looks like the duration is the same between the implementation and evaluation RFPs. Does this suggest that implementers should leave some months at the end of the project for evaluators to wrap up their reports?

**Answer:** Initial implementation funding will be limited to the two (2) – three (3) year funding period. While third-party evaluators may need additional time to complete their written work-product or report, this should not impact the timeline for implementation.

50. **Question:** Is there an expectation for a "scientific article" following the two (2) – three (3) year period?

**Answer:** The implementing organizations may be required to work with the third-party evaluator to publish a final report on the data and outcomes from the implementation period.

### **Application Requirements**

51. **Question:** Does my organization need to be registered to do business in Texas? Does an organization have to have to be licensed by the State of Texas if we are interested in providing parent support and training for families with Birth to five (5) years old children?

**Answer:** If registration or a licence is required for the vendor to provide proposed services in the State of Texas, the vendor must have received it by the award date; however, vendors do not need to be registered or licensed by the State of Texas prior to submitting their proposal for consideration. That said, it would be helpful for the County to know if the vendor believes it will need to obtain additional licensing in order to implement its proposed program or intervention in the State of Texas.

**If registration or a license is required to provide proposed services in the State of Texas, we strongly encourage vendors to have applied and received it by the award date. Vendors who believe they would need an additional grace period should include in their proposal discussion of any additional licensing, permits, or other legal approvals they would need to begin implementing their proposed program or intervention and the estimated timeline for completing those processes prior to implementation.**

**Vendors do not need to be licensed by the State of Texas prior to submitting their proposal for consideration.**

52. **Question:** What information and level of detail is required for the organizational information requirement?

**Answer:** Please refer to specifications sheet, page 18 of 31.



**53. Question:** What's the definition of evidentiary basis? What are the parameters?

**Answer:** A list of possible outcomes and information on what “evidentiary basis” refers to can be found in the RFP. Please refer to the specification sheets, on pages 13- 14 and 20 – 23 of 30. For additional guidance, please feel free to visit the Prenatal-to-3 Policy clearinghouse webpage at <https://pn3policy.org/pn-3-state-policy-clearinghouse/>.

Although we will consider a vendor’s ability to show an existing evidentiary basis for their program or initiative in evaluating proposals, vendors are also encouraged to submit proposals for new ideas or initiatives that do not yet have an established evidentiary foundation but for which the vendor can make a strong case for funding based on other reasons consistent with the purpose and scope of the RFP.

Applicants do not need to submit programs or initiatives for ECIF funding that have already been evaluated through a randomized controlled trial or other scientific method. However, applicants whose programs are selected for funding through the ECIF must be willing to have their new or existing program rigorously evaluated, as explained in the RFP.

**54. Question:** How can an entity prepare to receive children and provide services to children when they are not certain that they will be awarded a grant? Would there be a project implementation grace period to allow an entity to apply for a license from childcare licensing, obtain permits, and complete inspections?

**Answer:** While we strongly encourage vendors to be able to implement their program or intervention by the award date, we also encourage out-of-state vendors to apply who are interested in bringing their promising or impactful programs and interventions to the County. Vendors who believe they would need an additional grace period beyond the award date should include in their proposal discussion of any additional licensing, permits, or other legal approvals they would need to begin implementing their proposed program or intervention and the estimated timeline for completing those processes prior to implementation.

**55. Question:** For clarification purposes, please confirm that there will be no startup time allowed in this project?

**Answer:** Operations should be ready by the award date, although we will permit a short grace period to allow for set up of any final logistics associated with the grant.

### **Miscellaneous Questions**

**56. Question:** According to page 13 of 30 in the RFP, Bidders may submit an indirect cost waiver. However, this is not referenced anywhere else in the RFP. Would you please if this does not apply?

**Answer:** This language has been removed from the specifications, please refer to page 14 of 30 per Addendum No. 1.

**57. Question:** Is there a grant application form on-line? If I respond electronically where on your Harris County BuySpeed webpage will I find the application?

**Answer:** No, there is not a grant application for this solicitation.

**58. Question:** We received this RFP (Job No. 20/0315) digitally. Does that prevent us from submitting our proposal electronically through Harris County BuySpeed Online, according to the information under Digital

Format (p.4 “If offeror obtained the bid specifications in digital format in order to prepare a response, *the proposal must be submitted in hard copy* according to the instructions contained in this proposal package.”)?

**Answer:** No, the language being referenced is standard language that is included in all solicitations published by the County. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and Governor Abbot’s disaster proclamation, vendors may submit proposals electronically or hard copy. Please refer to the specification sheets, pages 10 - 11 of 30, for submittal instructions.

59. **Question:** Is there a recommended template for the Transmittal letter?

**Answer:** There is no recommended template for the transmittal letter. The vendor may use their own format, as long as the vendor adheres to the page limit. Where there’s no assigned a page limit, the vendor can assume that was intentional.

60. **Question:** Is there a template that you would like us to use for the budget?

**Answer:** No, there is not a template for the budget.

61. **Question:** Where in the portal should the finished application be uploaded?

**Answer:** Please refer to <https://bids.hctx.net/bsa>. Online submittal instructions are listed under Job No. 20/0315.

62. **Question:** Must all six (6) sections fit within the twelve (12) pages, as well as the table of contents? Or, are the twelve (12) pages within Section II only?

**Answer:** The twelve (12) page limit applies to Section II: Scope of Service/Narrative of Proposed Services only.

63. **Question:** Is the “RFP number” we must include on all pages of the proposal the same as the “Job Number” listed at the top right hand of the RFP?

**Answer:** The RFP number is the same as the job number. It doesn’t have to be included on all pages of the proposal submittal.

64. **Question:** Is there a “Pricing Page” that is required in addition to the project budget? If so, what is the difference between the two? Is there a form/template that can be provided to fill out for the “Pricing Information”?

**Answer:** Please refer to Pricing/Delivery Information sheet, page 25 of 30.

65. **Question:** Attachment h., References is referred to, but not included in the RFP appendices?

**Answer:** This language has been removed from the specifications, please refer to page 12 of 30 per Addendum No. 1.

66. **Question:** Does the twelve (12) page limit for the proposal apply only to Section II, Scope of Services/ Narrative of Proposal Services?

**Answer: Please refer to answer for question number 62.**

67. **Question:** Are all the items listed on Section IV- Organizational Information/Qualifications excluded from the 12 -page limit? (Vendor History, Company organization chart etc.)

**Answer: Please refer to answer for question number 62.**

68. **Question:** Is there a source (Harris County website) where I can confirm who is on the list of Vendors Owing Taxes/or other debts?

**Answer: Please refer to <https://www.hctax.net/Property/PropertyTax>.**

69. **Question:** We are requesting information about the "Indirect cost waiver (no page limit)" listed on page 14 of the RFP package. What is this? Which pages in the bid package is it discussed on? Is it a pre-printed form that needs to be completed? If not pre-printed, what information will be expected to be in this section?

**Answer: This language has been removed from the specifications, please refer to page 14 of 30 per Addendum No. 1.**

70. **Question:** Is the Job No. (20/0315) the same thing as the "RFP Number" ("PROPOSAL MUST SHOW THE RFP NUMBER..." [p. 1])?

**Answer: Yes.**

71. **Question:** On p. 4 under Section IV: Organizational Information/Qualifications, bullet 6: "References (Attachment h)": There doesn't appear to be an Attachment h in the package, and it is not checked in the Table of Contents (on p. 2). Do we assume we do NOT need to submit an Attachment h, or do we need to request a form?

**Answer: Please refer to answer for question number 65.**

72. **Question:** On p. 11 under B. ONLINE PROPOSAL SUBMISSION, bullet 2: "Proposals must indicate for which contract opportunities the Offeror is submitting": Does that refer to the Job No and the name of the funding opportunity "Harris County Early Childhood Impact Fund," or something else?

**Answer: Yes, that refers to the job number and title.**

73. **Question:** On p. 14 under Suggested Proposal Guidelines: If we do NOT have a conflict of interest, must we insert a sheet to make that statement?

**Answer: No, if there is no conflict of interest a statement is not required.**

74. **Question:** Could you please confirm that we do not need to provide proof of insurance until we are an awarded vendor? Please see: Table of Contents Section I (p. 11) requirement: "... Proof of Insurance (Attachment e),".... *versus* INSURANCE (p. 15) Prior to providing services at any Harris County facilities, awarded vendor(s) shall provide proof of insurance...".

**Answer: Proof of insurance is required, please refer to attachment e., Minimum Insurance Requirements and specifications sheet, page 11 of 30.**

75. **Question:** May the vendor use their standard company proposal title page in addition to the County's? If so, may the vendor assume that will not count toward the page limit?

**Answer:** Yes, a company proposal title page may be used and it will not count toward the page limit.

76. **Question:** Do resumes count toward the page limit?

**Answer:** Please refer to answer for question number 62.

77. **Question:** Should the vendor include research citations in an Appendix or in Section VI, miscellaneous? Do the list of citations count toward the page limit?

**Answer:** The vendor should include any information that provides support for their proposal submittal. No, citations will not count toward the page limit.

78. **Question:** Please confirm that any content not indicated as having a page limit in the list on page 14 does not count toward the page limit or have any page limits for that section.

**Answer:** Please refer to answer for question number 62.

79. **Question:** Should resumes be placed in an Appendix or in Section VI, miscellaneous?

**Answer:** Please refer to specifications sheet, page 12 of 30.

80. **Question:** If we do not receive an email indicating successful submission, whom should we contact to confirm submission?

**Answer:** Please contact Sandra Melancon @ 713-274-4428 or [sandra.melancon@pur.hctx.net](mailto:sandra.melancon@pur.hctx.net).

81. **Question:** For an electronic submission, are electronic signatures acceptable?

**Answer:** Yes.

82. **Question:** If we submit the RFP through the online portal, does the Cover Sheet need to be signed in ink and submitted as a PDF? Or can we sign the Cover Sheet with a digital signature?

**Answer:** Please refer to answer for question number 81.

83. **Question:** Regarding upload of files to the Harris County portal, are there any file size limitations?

**Answer:** There is no size limitation, however, the proposer will receive an email indicating that the proposal was submitted successfully. If the proposer doesn't receive notification, please contact Sandra Melancon to confirm receipt of proposal.

84. **Question:** Are vendors that we consider as our subcontractors, be listed in the Subcontractor Listing Form (Attachment j)?

**Answer:** Yes.

85. **Question:** The “Special Requirements/Instructions” section says that on online submission must be “One (1) Portable Document Format (PDF) document.” Do all the requirements for a hardcopy submission still apply to a PDF submission? For example, how would a PDF submission address the requirement that “A tabbed divider page marked with the section number should separate each section”? Should we create pages within our PDF submission that stand as physical tabs, with headings, etc.?

**Answer:** Yes, please create pages within the PDF document that would substitute for a tabbed divider page.

86. **Question:** For attachment g., Audited Financial Statements, may an offeror provide a hyperlink to its audited financial statements if they are available to the public on a public facing website?

**Answer:** No, please provide the actual statements.

87. **Question:** Regarding the page limits for particular sections, should we assume that:

- a. Capabilities and relative experience (1-page limit) refers only to the first listed item “Vendor’s history, background and principal officers” in Section IV?
- b. Program description and evidentiary basis (2-page limit); Discussion of problem, proposed outcomes, target population, and theory of change (3-page limit); and Implementation plan (4-page limit) means that the total of Section II. Scope of Service/Narrative of Proposed Services should be nine (9) pages?

**Answer:** Please refer to answer for question number 62.

88. **Question:** Page 12, Section IV requires a copy of the completed Certificate of Interested Parties Form 1295. Instructions require that we send the signed Form 1295 to the Agency who will acknowledge the form on the Texas Ethics Commission website. Please advise if the signed form should be emailed or mailed to Buyer.

**Answer:** Please complete Form 1295 and submit with proposal.

89. **Question:** When submitting electronically which Repository Location from the drop down menu do we choose?

**Answer:** Please refer to answer for question number 61.

90. **Question:** As a small non-profit organization, almost all of the people who work for our organization are volunteers. The proposal form is asking for a company name as well as about health insurance. How should we handle this section so that it does not reflect negatively on our organization?

**Answer:** Whether a vendor does or does not carry health insurance, this has neither a positive or negative effect on proposal evaluation.

91. **Question:** For Section V: Legal Documents (p. 16), do we supply a contractual agreement between us and Harris County that defines the terms of provided services to Harris County, as if we were a chosen vendor?

**Answer:** This section is for vendors that may provide any agreement or contract in addition to the County’s master agreement.

92. **Question:** As an Educational Technology company, we have contracted with Amazon Web Services to host our cloud-based platform. We have also contracted with a company as an Amazon Managed Services provider

to manage our AWS account. Are these the type of contracts referenced in Section V: Legal Documents that should be included in our proposal?

**Answer: Please refer to answer for question number 91.**

93. **Question:** If the implementation of our program requires technological infrastructure (internet access, mobile devices or laptops, etc.), how can we include this consideration into the proposal? Is an appendix about "tech requirements" enough?

**Answer: Yes, please include as an appendix.**

94. **Question:** Please clarify how confidential information should be made 'readily separable' from the proposal if such information is embedded throughout the offeror's response.

**Answer: Confidential information should be readily separable from the proposal, and shall be CLEARLY MARKED "CONFIDENTIAL".**

95. **Question:** The solicitation indicates in several places that "Proposals must be sealed and must show the RFP Number, Description and be marked "SEALED PROPOSAL". What does the County mean by "description" or is that referencing the name of the project?

**Answer: The description is referencing the title of the project.**

96. **Question:** Please confirm that Section III, page 12, Pricing/Delivery form and itemized cost breakdown) should be included in the submission volume and not as a separate volume.

**Answer: Yes, please include as a part of the proposal submittal.**

97. **Question:** Please advise where the Certificate of Insurance should be provided in the proposal.

**Answer: Please see Section I, page 11 of 30.**

98. **Question:** Are letters of intent/support required from collaborators or simply name, time, contact information sufficient? If required, do we include in section IV (References)?

**Answer: Yes, please include in Section IV.**

99. **Question:** Can References be provided by customers/partners not party to the proposal?

**Answer: Yes.**

100. **Question:** Are we able to embed links in the response document, for example for biographies of collaborators, technical detail, etc.

**Answer: Please provide actual documents.**

101. **Question:** On the Tax Form/Debt/Residence Certificate how would you like tax exempt property vs. non-tax exempt properties represented?

**Answer: Please list all properties as requested in attachment a., Tax Form/Debt/Residence Certification.**

102. **Question:** The requirement to complete Form 1295 (Certificate of Interested Parties) is mentioned on page 3 and page 16 of the proposal. When we attempt to complete the form, we are prompted to enter a contract ID number and description of services, goods or other property to be provided. Since we are not yet engaged in a contract with Harris County, what information should be referenced in completing the form?

**Answer: The contract id: Job No. 20/0315 and the description: Programs or Interventions to be Funded by the Harris County Early Childhood Impact Fund to Improve Early Childhood Health and Development Outcomes, Reduce Disparities, and Generate Evidence to Better Meet the Needs of Young Children and their Families for Harris County**

103. **Question:** Are public school districts eligible to apply?

**Answer: Yes, public school districts are eligible to apply.**

104. **Question:** Are federally qualified health clinics allowed to apply?

**Answer: Yes, federally qualified health clinics are eligible to apply.**

105. **Question:** I see the bid opened in October of 2020 but the next bid is not until February of 2021. Is this still available to bid on?

**Answer: Yes. This bid is still open, until the date listed on BuySpeed.**

106. **Question:** Can services occur inside the City of Houston?

**Answer: Yes, services can be provided anywhere in Harris County.**

107. **Question:** Is there a link or recording of the pre-proposal conference that we can access and view?

**Answer: No, a recording of the presentation will not be provided, however, all questions asked during the presentation are listed in these FAQs.**

108. **Question:** Are for-profit companies eligible to apply (our services include fitness and educational classes for children ages twelve (12) months to twelve (12) years)?

**Answer: For-profit companies are also eligible to apply.**